

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
March 9 2022
Zoom Virtual Meeting**

Present: Chairman Susan Malan, Robert Day, Tom Nichols, Jim Vineburgh, Tom Pinkowish, Mary Ellen Barnes and Peter Decker

Absent: Brian Weinstein

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Malan at 4:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion made by Robert Day to approve the February 2022 minutes. Jim Vineburgh seconded.

INTRODUCTION:

Meeting was held virtually on Zoom. Susan introduced Mary Ellen Barnes. She is a new member of the commission. She is the Park and Recreation and Social Services Director in town. Susan let everyone know that another meeting was starting at 4:45 and they will be need to use the Zoom log in for that meeting so we will need to keep it short today.

Visitors: None

Updates: Covid-19 update- last meeting was yesterday (Tuesday, 3/8). It was determined they no longer need to meet according to the CDC guidelines and State of CT Department of Health but can put the committee back together again if needed.

Planning and Zoning Report:

Discussion about the new businesses coming into town and the applications in January and February a gym in Centerbrook and Nutmeg Pharmacy moving across the street

Approved Zoning Permits:

January

Application No. 22-2 – **46 Plains Rd Unit 11**, approval for change of use to contractor office and storage warehouse equipment; New England Commercial Properties LLC/Iron Mt Solutions

Application No. 22-3 – **125 Westbrook Road**, approval for nail salon to occupy space where drycleaner was located.

Application No. 22-6 – **35-41 Unit #6 Industrial Park Rd**, approval for renovation of existing building into storage units with 12,500 sq ft second floor to be added.

February

Application No. 22-8 – **3A Main Street, Centerbrook**, approval for massage therapy in 750 sq ft of the unit

Application No. 22-9 – **3A Main Street, Centerbrook**, approval for skincare services in 750 sq ft of the unit

Application No. 22-12 – **7 Main Street, Essex**, approval for massage therapy in 750 sq ft of the unit

Special Exception Applications:

PZC Application #21-14- Approval for reuse of the existing building as a “Wellness Center” for private clients who will use the facility for overnight accommodations. Building to be operated as part of Prive Swiss. No treatment is to occur on the property, length of stay to be no less than 2 weeks and no more than 9 individual residential units with one person per unit shall be present at one time.

Discussion on this about the length of stay at this location. They will only be sleeping and eating there, the treatments will be in Ivoryton or Westbrook at either Prive Swiss location.

Public hearings for the following applications have been set for April 5, 2022:

PZC Application 22-05 Special Exception under Section 80 of the Essex Zoning Regulations proposing a fitness center to occupy approx. 4,250 sq ft of the 16,000 sq ft building at **35-41 Industrial Park Road Units 23 and 24** (Map 44 Lot 27-23 and 24) **aka 40 Main Street, Centerbrook**. *Applicant: MPower Health and Fitness, LLC c/o David Mulford; Owner: Herbert T. Clark III*

PZC Application 22-06 Special Exception under Section 80 of the Essex Zoning Regulations proposing a Nutmeg Pharmacy to occupy approx. 4,500 sq ft of the 16,000 sq ft building at **35-41 Industrial Park Road Units 22, 25 and 28** (Map 44 Lot 27-22, 25 and 28) **aka 40 Main Street, Centerbrook**. *Applicant: RX Specialty Consulting, dba Nutmeg Pharmacy; Owner: Herbert T. Clark III*

Continuation of a public hearing on April 5 for the following item:

PZC Application 22-03 Proposed Text Change under Section 123 of the Essex Zoning Regulations proposing a **text amendment to Section 40.L** removing the sentence “except for maximum building coverage where portions of any lot are in different districts”, omitting the carve out for maximum building coverage and still requires a special exception permit *Applicant/Owner: Piage Management Corp.*

Site Plan Review Application:

None at this time

Approved Text Amendments:

None at this time.

Other updates:

Cannabis Subcommittee: This subcommittee has met three times and is going to provide a report the PZC in April. A moratorium is in place until December 31, 2022.

Regional Housing Plan: On March 17th the Regional Council of Governments is holding a meeting with Essex specifically to get input and feedback regarding the housing plan for Essex. Information for logging in will be sent separately. Please join the meeting if possible!

Regional Transit Info: 9 Town Transit is starting a new program promoting access to local agriculture through messaging provided on the bus. Visit www.access2ag.com to check it out.

Outdoor Entertainment: Discussion re: music at Scotch Plains Tavern and complaints from neighbors' issue that there was not a permit issued allowing outdoor music to exist.

ACTION ITEMS:

Susan asked all to discuss items at the April 2022 meeting for the POCD since we have limited time today.

OLD BUSINESS:

Covid-19 update- Meetings have been every other week. With the governor's mask mandate expiring the end of this month, maybe things can start getting back to a bit normal.

Harbor Management Commission- there were no meetings since we last met.

Sidewalk project- Susan went over the sidewalk project for all new members. It will extend from 1 River Rd. to 85 River Rd. Since there is no money yet for the vehicle bridge repair, they will hold off on the project until they have enough funds as they don't want to have construction twice on River Road.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion on the River Museum- they are going to have 2 boats boarding at the foot of Main . Busses are sitting at the circle- a bit of congestion there.

Went over the application on the Boathouse request to change the zone

Tom Pinkowish presented information about the National Estuarine Research Reserve. He emailed everyone links to look over.

<https://coast.noaa.gov/nerrs/reserves/connecticut.html>

/DEEP/Coastal-Resources/NERR/NERR-Home-Page (<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Coastal-Resources/NERR/NERR-Home-Page>)

<https://news.extension.uconn.edu/2022/01/24/noaa-designates-nations-30th-nerr-in-southeastern-ct/#>

There are 30 of these across the nation. Not all states have them, but some have more than one. Essex started the process of having one in 1991 but they did not get approved until this past

January. It will be a research area- it goes from Lord Cove area down the Connecticut River heading east past UConn Avery Point and the Thames River. It includes all marine parts and extends into the middle of Long Island Sound. The research will be done on land and water. It will be community and educational outreach programs. It is an initiative to teach kids that are unable to get to the shoreline. It will give us better information on the impact the shoreline and sound have on human activity in the area.

Upcoming Guests and Meeting Locations:

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 13, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Robert Day to adjourn the meeting at 4:37 p.m. Tom Nichols seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cindy Sadlowski, Commission Clerk